

Eastern Illinois University  
**The Keep**

---

2006

Press Releases

---

8-25-2006

# 08/25/2006 - EIU President Hencken Announces His Intentions To Retire.pdf

University Marketing and Communications

Follow this and additional works at: [http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press\\_releases\\_2006](http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_2006)

---

## Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "08/25/2006 - EIU President Hencken Announces His Intentions To Retire.pdf" (2006). 2006. 225.

[http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press\\_releases\\_2006/225](http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_2006/225)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Press Releases at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in 2006 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).

## EIU President Hencken Announces His Intentions to Retire

Aug-25-2006



*EIU President Lou Hencken*

After 41 years at Eastern Illinois University – the last six as president – Louis V. Hencken has announced he will retire in a year's time.

"I have always been told that 'to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens,' and I firmly believe that there is a natural rhythm to academic institutions like this one – a time to begin and a time to end," Hencken said Friday during a special meeting of the university's Board of Trustees.

"I have no doubts that the time has come for the university to begin the search process for its 11th president\*\*."

"The board was really hoping to hear that Mr. Hencken had decided to continue to serve as president. But while we are sorry to see him go, we certainly respect his decision to do so," said board Chair Leo Welch. "The past five years have been financially challenging ones for the university. However, Eastern Illinois University has continued to see growth -- both in enrollment and in its capital development. We owe Lou much credit for the large part he played in those successes."

Welch also expressed his appreciation for Hencken's willingness to remain flexible as the search process for his successor gets underway.

Hencken's current contract expires June 30, 2007; he advised trustees, however, that, if need be, he was willing to remain in office after that date and until a new president can

assume the responsibility.

Hencken also told trustees he was letting them know of his intentions early on so that the university community would have ample time to identify both its current and future needs before beginning the search process.

The search itself will take place without input from the incumbent.

"It would be inappropriate for me to participate in that process," Hencken said.

However, his schedule will remain full even without the extra duty.

"I am personally incapable of being a lame duck, and the challenges and opportunities facing the university are too important to permit that to happen," Hencken added. "I have a full agenda for the next 12 months or so, as I work through the list of goals yet to be accomplished before I leave office."

Many of his primary goals are extensions of the successes Hencken has already seen during his presidency.

Under his leadership, for example, the university has seen the completion of several major capital development projects, including the renovation of both Booth Library and Blair Hall, and the construction of a new Human Services building, a new wing on the Tarble Arts Center and the MLK Jr. Union Food Court.

Projects currently in progress include a \$60 million expansion/renovation of Eastern's Doudna Fine Arts Center, with a tentative completion date set for late Fall 2007, and an addition onto Lantz Arena, making room for an academic center, as well as additional classroom and office space.

Hencken would very much like to see plans move ahead for a new building in which to house the university's Textbook Rental Service, now located in the southern wing of Pemberton Hall. The vacated space could then be used to house Eastern's Honors College and/or the new bachelor's of science in nursing degree program, which was approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education earlier this year. The program is tentatively set to begin offering courses in August 2007.

The president also wants to follow up on the university's successful three-year "You Are EIU" fundraising campaign, which raised in excess of \$11 million.

In Fall 2005, the university saw its enrollment increase for the fourth consecutive year, reaching a record-breaking 12,129 students enrolled in on- and off-campus classes. Hencken, who has consistently promised to maintain the academic quality of the institution and to ensure classes are available so that students can graduate in a timely manner, will continue his focus on enrollment management.

He believes the university's commitment to quality education is what helped gain Eastern its overwhelmingly positive report from the North Central Association accreditation team, which visited campus in February 2005.

“It was the best recommendation we could have received,” the president said.

In total, Hencken, 62, has served Eastern in a variety of administrative positions for 41 years, beginning his career in student affairs as a graduate assistant. He advanced through the housing ranks as a counselor and both assistant and associate director prior to being selected as director in 1975.

In 1989, he was named associate vice president for student affairs, assuming responsibility for three new student affairs areas besides housing.

His duties continued to expand in 1992, when he was named vice president for student affairs.

In addition, Hencken served as interim director of athletics (1996-1997) when the Panthers were the Ohio Valley Conference All-Sports Champion. He is a former NCAA football official, and was assigned to five NCAA playoff games, including the 1989 NCAA Division III National Championship game.

As an active member of the Charleston-area community, Hencken has served on multiple boards, including the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center Board of Directors – six years as chair – and the Credit Union 1 Board of Directors.

Hencken and his wife, Mary Kay, a retired business education teacher at Charleston High School, reside in Charleston.

-----

**\*\*Louis V. Hencken** is Eastern’s 10th president, but the ninth “sitting president.”

**Samuel M. Inglis** was appointed as the institution’s first president in 1898, but died before officially assuming the full duties of the office.

Other presidents are:

**Livingston C. Lord** (1899 to 1933)

**Robert G. Buzzard** (1933 to 1956)

**Quincy V. Doudna** (1956 to 1971)

**Gilbert C. Fite** (1971 to 1976)

**Daniel E. Marvin** (1977 to 1983)

**Stanley G. Rives** (1983 to 1992)

**David L. Jorns** (1992 to 1999)

**Carol D. Surles** (1999 to 2001)

**Louis V. Hencken** (2001 to present)